

HUNGARIAN PAPER ACCUSES PROFESSOR OF BEING A SPY

[The following is the full text of an article by Janos Bolygo which appeared in the 3 July 1966 issue of the daily paper of the Patriotic People's Front, Magyar Nemzet, Budapest, p 7.]

Cultural and scientific exchange among states is an important thing. It makes possible a better acquaintance with the intellectual forces of various countries, mutual respect, and creative, useful cooperation in some questions. It is a contact which can disperse misunderstandings, can resolve rigid prejudices, and can thin out the fabric of distrust. Thus it can be of benefit, not only to the countries involved, but can also contribute to the peaceful coexistence of different social systems and can thus serve the cause of peace.

Cultural and scientific exchange is a good thing. If it is used well. But if it is misused, then it becomes the contrary of what has been said. Among the many good examples there are also strange cases.

Such, for example, is the following example which began in August 1965. It was then that John Michael Montias, American citizen and resident of New York, arrived in our homeland on the basis of an exchange agreement between the Hungarian Institute of Cultural Contacts and the American Inter-University Committee to

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conduct scientific studies as a scholarship researcher. Mr Montias is Professor of Economics at Yale University in the United States and the subject of his study was "an examination of the chief economic factors determining the volume and structure of Hungarian foreign trade." Naturally, the Professor received far-reaching aid from the Hungarian State for this, and he received the support and hospitality of institutions and experts involved in this subject.

Then Mr Montias began to work, but his work was quite different than that to which the agreement pertained. He visited those institutions to which he had an invitation and permit and then he regularly entered institutions for which he had received no permit.

By the middle of January 1966, he had honored with his constant visits the National Planning Office, the Central Statistics Office, the Economics Sciences Institute, the Business Cycle and Market Research Institute, the Computer Technology Institute of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, and other scientific and research institutes. In the course of his visits, he established contact with more than 20 Hungarian economists in important offices. For months, he went about asking questions, informing himself, but, curiously, not about that which it was his goal in staying here. Instead of factors determining the volume and structure of Hungarian foreign trade, he tried to obtain strictly confidential and even secret state documents. Thus, for example, he asked his Hungarian acquaintances to give him a "friendly" look at the protocols of commercial

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talks conducted with certain friendly countries by the Hungarian State and documents on our talks pertaining to long range economic contracts. He was most interested in various CEMA materials, in internal questions of the organization and in relations of the CEMA states to one another. He methodically tried to obtain data on shipments, imports, and exports of the socialist countries which were of strategic significance.

Thus, the interest of the professor was considerably broader than the theme originally announced and authorized. Indeed, it was so broad that the original theme could hardly be found in it. Even at the end, he was not interested in that for which he allegedly came here.

When one of the Hungarian experts mentioned this wonderingly, Mr Montias shrugged his shoulders and said that Hungarian foreign trade was not too interesting an area for him. In any case, there were a number of good publications appearing which could be studied at home in America.

Then why did he come here? And why within the framework of this agreement? It is a strange case. Mr Montias, who asked and enjoyed the hospitality of Hungary, studied other countries through Hungary. It might be added that Mr Montias had honored other socialist countries with his research work in previous years and, as it turned out, always inquired about another country when in one

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of these countries. And he was always concerned by questions which the country involved handled secretly and which, for this reason, could not be learned about directly in that country, or at least only with danger. This scientific method is a curious one.

This "economic activity" has yet another aspect which it is difficult to explain. The economics professor of Yale University asked the Hungarian economists about such "economic" questions as various phenomena of Hungarian internal political and cultural life, the effect of these on public opinion, internal and foreign political events of the socialist camp, the travels and visits of certain politicians, various questions about the political life of the socialist countries, the probable causes of all these and the "inside information", as he called it, on certain events.

In any case, the professor is not exclusively an economics professor for Yale University but is also a member of institutions and organs which study the socialist countries according to various viewpoints and with various methods. It is well-known that these institutions have close contact with the American CIA. Mr Montias is an expert in that curious and infamous and we might say doubtful category which is called in the West "Sovietology" or "kremlinology". Thus, Mr Montias misused a noble goal and a good cause.

He misused trust and hospitality. But it is worthwhile thinking how he tried to misuse it. What were those phenomena which he tried to use and on which he built? It is certain that the attempts of

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Mr Montias were frustrated in general in the case of the Hungarian experts. But it would be an error to remain silent about the fact that his activity was facilitated to a certain extent by the relaxation, the thoughtless and irresponsible behavior of certain persons, the gossip, the almost childish naivete, the lack of vigilance and the lack of civic self-awareness, the kowtowing to a guest from the West, and that petit-bourgeois characteristic which in the hope of a Western invitation, travel, and grants loses the ability to think soberly. One must think about what sort of phenomena and behavior they build on. They do not completely lack a base, those who like Montias misuse hospitality.

Naturally, no one wants to see again the "distorted vigilance" of former years, the suspicious, distrustful, bad atmosphere. But it can be justly expected from every citizen that he will honor the laws of the state, remember the security and interest of his homeland and be clear about his civic responsibilities and the responsibility which a responsible position demands of him.

The curious case of Mr Montias warns us that we cannot forget about vigilance as long as there are guests who are inclined to forget so much, and especially that they are guests.